

Minutes

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

14 June 2022

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge



	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors John Riley (Chairman) Richard Lewis (Vice-Chairman) Kaushik Banerjee Kishan Bhatt Narinder Garg Gursharan Mand Stuart Mathers (Opposition Lead)</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Mark Braddock, Senior Democratic Services Manager Neil Fraser, Democratic Services Officer</p>
3.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
4.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
5.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th May 2022 be approved as a correct record.</p>
6.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED AS PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items would be considered in public.</p>
7.	<p>INTRODUCTION TO OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY IN HILLINGDON (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Mark Braddock, Senior Democratic Services Manager, provided the Committee with an introduction to overview and scrutiny within Hillingdon.</p> <p>Key topics highlighted from the report included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The purpose and role of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee, including how the Committee fit into the local and national scrutiny structure;

- How Select Committees worked, including their alignment with Cabinet portfolios, adherence to the Local Government Act, and partnership working with Cabinet Members and reporting to Cabinet;
- The Scrutiny Call-In process, including use of the Hillingdon Call-In app, special urgency decision making and the waiving of the call-in period, and the Leader's emergency powers; and
- Scrutiny Essentials and Top Tips.

The Committee was reminded that it had no direct decision making powers, though could make suggestions or recommendations for actions to Cabinet. Additionally, the Committee would be given the opportunity to provide comments to Cabinet prior to it making certain decisions, as part of the Council's consultation process.

Members requested further detail on how the Committee could request information on Cabinet decisions. The Committee was advised that national guidance allowed for pre-decision scrutiny, where possible. Within Hillingdon, the Cabinet Forward Plan was published each month which set out the schedule of decisions to be made by Cabinet. The Committee was free to request information on those published items, where it was available and where the topic fell within its remit. Information items could also be requested to be added to the Committee's Work Programme, though sight of actual Cabinet reports was at the discretion of the relevant Cabinet Member.

Members raised the issue of topics that cut across multiple Cabinet Member portfolios, and how it was determined which Committee would review the report on such topics. The Committee was advised that in such instances, in an effort to avoid duplication of officer work, any relevant report would be considered by the 'primary' Select Committee (i.e. the Committee whose remit was most closely aligned to the topic's service area/department). Where there were specific interests that crossed a number of Committees, the Chairmen from those interested Committees could be invited to attend the primary Committee meeting and contribute to consideration of the item.

On the matter of Call-Ins, the Committee requested detail of how these were reported and whether there was potential for further reporting to increase transparency. Members were advised that Full Council received an annual report which provided confirmation of successful Call-Ins from the previous 12 months. It was agreed that options for further reporting could be considered in the future. Regarding data confidentiality and the app, it was confirmed that the app did not contain any sensitive information and would always reference a publicly available decision document.

RESOLVED: That the report and presentation be noted.

8. **CABINET FORWARD PLAN** (*Agenda Item 6*)

Consideration was given to the Cabinet Forward Plan.

Members requested that the monthly budget outturn report be included on the Forward Plan document for future meetings.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.

9. **WORK PROGRAMME** (*Agenda Item 7*)

Consideration was given to the Committee's Work Programme. Members were advised of an alteration to the published programme, with the mid-year budget item moved from

July to September 2022.

Members were reminded of the remit of the Committee and the criteria to consider when suggesting the addition of items. Members went on to suggest the following:

- An information item from the electoral services team regarding lessons learned from the most recent election, including implementation of recent boundary changes, new polling station locations, and any relevant new legislation.
- An information item on Human Resources within Hillingdon, including current operational processes, any identified issues, and potential improvements.
- An information item on digitalisation and the use of technology within Hillingdon;
- An information item on sub-contracting and quality control within Hillingdon.

Suggestions for possible reviews included:

- A review of recruitment and the retention of staff within Hillingdon, with emphasis on comparison with other London authorities.
- A review on Hillingdon's procurement process, with emphasis on how Hillingdon was securing value for money considering external factors such as Brexit, rising inflation, etc;

Regarding the suggested electoral services item, Members were reminded that much of the topic was within the purview of Full Council.

Members highlighted the use of a scorecard for assessing potential items. It was suggested that the scorecard could be used when selecting potential reviews.

It was agreed that the clerk would review the suggested items for potential inclusion on the Work Programme before feeding back to the Committee. It was highlighted that Members could email the Chairman and the clerk with additional detail on the suggested items following the meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.06 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Neil Fraser on 01895 250692. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.